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ABSTRACT

There are thousands of alternative media outlets in the United States. By definition, they differ from the mainstream dominant media. The idea that the media represent and promulgate societal values is widely held. While not monolithic, the dominant media which grew alongside mass industrialization share an overriding bias. The dominant media promote such values as the sanctity of the "ordinary" family, the celebration of celebrity, and the triumph of personal initiative over bureaucratic control and state inefficiency. Alternative media, which promote an active, critical, and empowered audience, tend to be independently operated, small-scale, openly supportive of political change, and critical of dominant institutions and values. Alternative media sources include periodicals, non-commercial radio stations, broadcast and low-power television stations, cable access operations, and independent video and film producers. The "Utne Reader," for example, represents a type of alternative press. Messages transmitted to the public during the next 10 years will influence the public's twenty-first century values. To the extent that alternative media are effective in reaching the public, the promulgation of a different set of values should be expected. If the values of the alternative media affect the new century, then more participants should feel more involved, share more information, and represent more interests than would be the case without the alternative media. (Seventeen references are attached.) (SG)

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The Alternative Media's Values for the 21st. Century

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The Alternative Media's Values for the 21st. Century

There are thousands of alternative media outlets in the United States. By definition, they differ from the mainstream dominant media. This paper examines the values inherent to the alternative media and compares them to the values of the dominant meda. It does so by first summarizing the concept of values, then applying value concepts to both forms of media. The findings suggest that unlike the dominant media, the alternative media promote an active, ctritical, and empowered audience.

Key concepts: media, values, alternative media, future

The Alternative Media's Values for the 21st Century

This is not a paper which discusses the effectiveness with which media-disseminated values are spread throughout the land. A large portion of media-related research and theory building has been devoted to media effects questions. Findings suggest that although there are a host of other important intervening factors, media and the messages they convey matter. While the violence studies, the political studies, the socialization studies and all the others differ from each other in particulars, they tend to share a reliance on the dominant media as their media variable. Starting from the notion, this paper looks at what defines "dominant" media, it takes seriously the notion that media and their messages may influence people (and hence their values), and looks indirectly at how such influences would be different if it were the alternative media we were examining, rather than the dominant.

Values

Values, as operationalized here, refer to the criteria we use to make judgements. They concern right and wrong, good and bad. They are similar to principles, which we use to guide our decisions, but they also have hierarchies of desired ends. Milton Rokeach (1973) suggests that a

> <u>value</u> is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. A <u>value system</u> is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning

> preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance (p. 5).

Of the nature of values, Rokeach (1973) isolates several descriptors and characteristics, including

- Values are enduring
- Values are proscriptive or prescriptive beliefs, they identify desirable and undesirable
- Values lead to action
- Values can be instrumental (means focused, whether regarding self or interaction with others)
- Values can be terminal (teleological or ends-focused, whether personal or social)
- Values are preferences and conceptions of preferences
- Values operate as standards
- Value systems assist in conflict resolution and decision making
- Values are motivators

The enduring nature of values need not mean that values are forever, rather, this suggests that values are internalized and treated as if they will withstand tests of time. Values actually are embedded in the social, political, and intellectual systems of their time. They arise in a given context, even though partly by definition they transcend immediate contexts. They are presented and taught by social institutions, friends and family. And despite (or perhaps because of) their over-arching nature, they can operate to shape and limit the imagination.

One ironic quality of values is that they so often are grounded in faith rather than in science. Proving the validity of values is largely an irrelevant concept. Yet, reliance on established value systems is customary during the pursuit of knowledge and proofs of the particulars. For example, the scientific method, steeped in the tradition of linear causality, offers validity to research methods which are designed to look for and find such causes. Science internalizes its own sets of value systems, which scientists use to evaluate work. Scientists can apply scientific values to assess research. Those fundamental values, however, go largely unchallenged (Ogilvy, 1979).

As a system of prospective guidelines, values necessarily delimit a range of acceptable options. They similarly may affect the nature of the information people have access to. If they are rational (or, perhaps, if people and our institutions are rational) -- an assumption this author makes no attempt here to in any way prove -- it would be likely that the values we adopt would be values that serve our perceived needs and perpetuate the power of those in a position to promulgate values.

Marcuse (1964), in his <u>One Dimensional Man</u>, speaks to the concept of values agenda-setting by those in control in modern society:

> [T]he productive apparatus tends to become totalitarian to the extent to which it determines not only the socially needed occupations, skills, and attitudes, but also individual needs and aspirations. It thus obliterates the opposition between the private and public existence, between individual and social needs (p. xv).

He asserts that the structure of the industrial society is one which effectively controls conceptions of rationality. Opposition and alternatives are swallowed up (p. xvi). Meaningful opposition is made to appear irrelevant and even counterproductive. "Appropriate" forms of opposition are channeled into systems that maintain the overall power structure and status quo. Oppositional values, being unable to meet the "scientific" proofs that a technology-based society demands as proof, get minimized.

Benjamin Bates (1987) takes a somewhat different approach in assessing oppositional values. He suggests that social values should ideally find themselves being represented in social policy. But that as those policies fail to adequately produce the desired end state, and as that desired end state shifts, social values become at odds with existing social policies, almost by necessity. His somewhat powerful view of the role of oppositional values differs from Marcuse's, but like Marcuse, he explains his view in terms of existing and emerging technological societal organization.

While Marcuse (1964) suggests that there are many important works and thinkers whose work give support to his assertions, he turns to the popular media for some bottom-line substantiation.

> Perhaps the most telling evidence can be obtained by simply looking at television or listening to the Alternative media radio for one consecutive hour for a couple of days, not shutting off the commercials, and now and then switching the station (p. xvii).

The idea that the media, through both form and content, represent and promulgate societal values is widely held. De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach (1975) suggest that the media, by raising and framing issues and ideas, may lay the framework for the clarification of values (p. 270). Levinson (1987), dealing more with media form, asserts

> technologies of communication, whose very function is to transmit ideas, should have some effect on the formal growth of ideas. . . . Surely, a circle shaped channel of communication would be more conducive to dissemination of circular than square ideas (p. 25).

Jacques Ellul (1964) expands on this notion. He writes in the closing section of The Technological Society that

> No human activity is possible except as it is mediated and censored by the technical medium. This is the great law of the technical society. Thought or will can only be realized by borrowing from technique its modes of expression (p. 418).

Using publishing as an example, Ellul (1964) notes that the technique of publishing is ideologically bound to the ideology of the culture.

> In a predominantly capitalistic technical culture, the book can be published only if it can return a profit. . . . If the publishing system is state-owned, the publication of revolutionary literature cannot even be considered. All this amounts to saying that technical forces, which were put into operation ostensibly for the diffusion of thought, lead in practice to its emasculation (p. 418).

Dominant Media Values

The title of this paper suggests that it is the alternative media's values we are concerned with here, not those of the dominant media. Yet, in order to understand "alternative", we must have some notion of that which they are alternatives to: the dominant media. As was mentioned earlier, most media research focuses on the dominant media. This makes sense for all sorts of reasons; the dominant media are the ones most people spend most of their time with; they are the ones others who read the research will be familiar with; they may be the easiest to use; they fund some of the research, etc. The resultant picture is necessarily skewed. The dominant media, though far from being monolithic, share an overriding bias.

Mass media grew alongside of mass industrialization. The rather expensive media technologies (cylinder presses, photoengraving equipment, etc.) were made possible by the same industrial revolution that tended to urbanize and homogenize America. Mass media were made possible by the output of the capitalist system and they profited from that system. They came to serve the masses homogenized content in much the same ways that factories turned out cars and toasters. Linking technology, ideology, and content, Altschull (1990) notes that

> The face of newspapers changed [with the onset of the mass media era] and with that change of face came revisions in content. Mass audiences had mass interests. There was no need for new

> ideologies. A belief system was already in place. Benjamin Franklin had observed more than a century earlier that newspapers would bring in greater profits when they were written in an entertaining manner that appealed to wider audiences. In the laissez-faire doctrine of Adam Smith, American editors found a value system that served as a model for their efforts to reach broader audiences (pp. 204-205).

Due to the communicative nature of communication media, even without considering issues of content, a case could be made in support of the idea that dominant media promulgated dominant technical/societal ideologies simply in their form. Newspapers provided undifferentiated audiences with access to common information and advertising. Newspapers also provided the mercantile community with a way to mass market their goods and services. Even the term broadcasting suggests the same was true for radio and television.

If one looks at control of the media, again one sees the dominant members of society at the helm. Media outlets are generally privately owned in the United States. The large and powerful outlets tend to be controlled by wealthy, white, male interests. Control is fairly concentrated and is often integrated with other media as well as non-media businesses. There are typically hierarchies of gatekeepers which work to filter content. As holding companies invest in media, the values of the media become increasingly synonymous with business values in general. Examination of the peripheral services the media set up to serve their needs further attests to this. Audience research and "ratings" measure and report

attributes that are important to the advertisers. They may be able to shed light on a host of audience characteristics, but they are not designed to help the media serve the "needs" or "values" of that audience. Programming services promote themselves in terms of their profit potentials for the media, not for their ability to serve other audience needs. Agents exist to sell media outlets, media space and time, and even portions of film scripts to the highest bidders.

When turning to the content of the dominant media, many observers have noted that the media play it safe and reinforce existing mass values to the extent that those values serve their own self interests. For example, Hal Himmelstein (1984, p. 305) notes that those in charge of American commercial television (the dominant form of broadcast television in the United States) "ultimately respond to television as a business, and the works of television as product." He suggests that the "scripts" of television, when decoded, portray

> traditional mainstream values:
>
> 1. The sanctity of the "ordinary" American family. . . .
> 2. The triumph of personal initiative over the bureaucratic control and inefficiency of the state. . . .
> 3. One's gain at another's expense. . . .
> 4. The elevated status of quiet authority in the status hierarchy of power and social control. . . .
> 5. The celebration of celebrity. . . .
> 6. The conversion of history and the deflection of questions of social structure. . . .

> [T]he dominant culture attempts to regulate and control viewer desires in terms of "possession" of material goods, a possession which presupposes their unequal distribution. . . .
>
> [It] attempts to keep the viewer outside the objects of her [sic] desire . . . and outside of power . . . .
>
> [It] legitimizes those individuals who are wealthy, ostentatious, and wield power over others (the characters of Dallas are excellent examples). . . .
>
> [It] defuses true oppositional positions (Himmelstein, 1984, pp. 305-308).

Himmelstein's second point (the triumph of personal initiative) must be seen in the power-denying context of dominant media generally. While media may celebrate individual initiative, such celebrations are likely to reinforce those initiatives that personify dominant values (such as the black man who made it to the "top" by successfully marketing Amos's Famous chocolate chip cookies), while at the same time frustrating oppositional personal initiatives.

Ellul speaks to many of the same points. He recognizs that while a "free" press gives dissidents a platform, the arena is so large and diverse, that the dissident's views essentially get lost in the crowd of voices. Referring to Sartre for sake of example, he writes

> Sartre represents one ten-thousandth of French authorship, and he reaches twenty thousand readers. Not bad. But in the circumstances it is difficult to have a genuine community of readers. . . . Technique erects a screen between the author and

> his readers. Miniature fireworks issue from the magic bottle, but not revolt (Ellul, 1964, p. 424).

Ellul takes special note of advertising and the values it brings to the culture through the media.

> The primary purpose of advertising technique is the creation of a certain way of life. . . . [O]bjects advertised are all the result of the same technical progress and are all of identical type from a cultural point of view. Therefore, advertisements seeking to prove that these objects are indispensable refer to the same conception of the world, man, progress, ideals -- in short, life. . . . American, Soviet, and Nazi advertisements are in inspiration closely akin; they express the same conception of life. . . . [Advertising refers] to a world in which there are no spiritual values to form and inform life (Ellul, 1964, p.p. 406-407).

Former American Vice-President Spiro Agnew said much the same thing when he complained that

> As often as not, it seems that many of the programs and most of the commercials from Madison Avenue appeal to a set of values entirely different from, if not in clear opposition to, the set of values taught in home, in school and in the church (Agnew, 1970, p. 8).

Michael Parenti (1986), whose strong left wing political voice would suggest that he and the conservative Agnew had little in common, echoes Agnew's observations and adds much in his book Inventing Reality. He

makes a powerful case for the constant bias of the dominant media. The media, he suggests, free by law from interference or "corrective" pressures, distort reality on all fronts (informational, entertainment) to forward the narrow interests of the powerful elite in the capitalist system. He too points to the shutting out of effective dissent.

When faced with such criticism, media managers typically point to examples of other content in the media mix and go on to say that if dominant capitalist values dominate American media, it is because that's what Americans want. And they're likely to point to ratings and sales to support their contention. They will also note that if American s are asked what they'd like to see in the media, the answers are generally "more of the same." As former FCC Commissioner Nick Johnson said, "The choice you'll never know is the choice you'll never make" (Johnson, 1972, p. 45).

The point here is not that there is anything wrong with the values presented on dominant American media, rather, that there is such a limited scope of values presented effectively through them. Sadly indicative of the state of dominant media values, in 1987, Lorimar introduced "ValueTelevision." It was a shop-at-home service designed to offer goods for sale on television (Biagi, 1988, p. 145).

Having made note of the dominant media value system, it is time to look at what else is available, the alternative media system.

Qualities of the Alternative Media

It is not entirely clear what is meant by "alternative media". There is no "official" designation. Yet, there do seem to be qualities that represent salient features of what are known as the alternative media. Many of them are offered below.

•Alternative media are those media which are not part of the dominant media.

While at first glance, this descriptor seems over broad and under descriptive, it does describe a salient factor. Being different, regardless of in what ways, is a statement that too often is underrepresented in the dominant media. That option is powerful. It provides legitimacy and forums for non-traditional sensibilities. "Different" also provides balance.

•Alternative media are independently owned, or are the mouthpiece of an interest group concerned with things other than (not necessarily opposed to) the status quo.

They are generally not parts of media conglomerates or holding companies.

•Alternative media tend to be small scale publications/outlets.

Their budgets tend to be small. They are often staffed, at least in part, by volunteers or by paid employees whose pay scales are lower than those of the dominant media. Their circulations are small. Lacking the

large gatekeeper structure, their content tends to reflect the authors' beliefs. In addition, due to the relatively low start-up costs (as compared to the huge costs of starting a dominant media outlet), entry into the marketplace is relatively accessible.

•Alternative media define success in ways other than purely commercial success. They generally reflect other values. They are conscious of having goals other than that of making profits. While most cannot operate at a loss, they are not likely to significantly change their editorial content in order to brighten their financial balance sheet. The owners of an all-news dominant radio station may have no qualms about switching to a Country and Western format if the profit potential from such a switch seems greater. The operators of an alternative medium are not going to do that sort of thing. Where the dominant media are in business to be in business, the alternative media are in business to make a point.

•Alternative media support social and political change and are openly partisan.

They often are involved in change movements, and do not dispassionately report from the outside. They provide their audience with instrumental information that may be used to further their goals. David Armstrong suggests that

first and foremost, they [alternative media] are used as tools for community action and organizing. They have an activist rather than passive relationship with their constituents. They seek to create change rather than affirming things as they are (Armstrong, 1981, p. 22).

•Alternative media look less formal and official.

Perhaps as a result of smaller scale technologies/equipment, their reliance on volunteers, and smaller production budgets, their "products" look less professional. This look or feel may have non-technological and non-budgetary explanations as well. It may be that they prefer the look of a more accessible/less "professional" glossy publication. With the popularization of and accessibility to more affordable "desktop publishing" options and the like, publications that continue to look less formal and official can increasingly be presumed to be looking that way as a matter of choice. Those that perpetuate the low tech look may be choosing to differentiate themselves from the dominant media in form as well as in content.

•Alternative media are more difficult to find than dominant media. Resulting from limited production/power, as well as restrictive distribution policies, alternative media are not as widely available as dominant media. Chain retailers often are supplied by chain distributors who do not handle small "publications" or "products."

•Alternative media openly criticize dominant institutions and values.

•Alternative media are less rigid and predictable.
Strict adherence to publication schedules is less likely. Size and length of content is less rigidly constrained. A program on a public access TV station may run 21 minutes or 34 minutes without causing major problems. The same would not be the case for dominant media.

•Alternative media are often populated by and distributed to segments of the population not dominated by white monied males.

•Alternative media strongly identify with communities and attempt to empower them.
These communities may be communities of taste/interest/or geographic nature.

•Alternative media compete for attention and ideology, not for revenue. It is common for Alternative media to point the audience to other Alternative media that might be similar in focus. In the dominant media, it would be rare for one "publication" to point its audience to another (unless both were owned by the same group owners). In the alternative media, if such information helps the audience attain the goals the "publication" is directed towards, it makes perfect sense to do so.

•Alternative media staff have interest-related loyalties.

•Alternative media provide an entry point for many ideas, forms of entertainment, styles, etc. that later go on and become adopted (perhaps in a sweetened or watered down form) by the dominant press and culture.

•Alternative media may be less entertainment and mass-audience oriented. Not being subject to the pressures of delivering audiences to advertisers, alternative media may opt to serve smaller audiences with idiosyncratic fare.

•Alternative media belong to different associations than the dominant media do.

•Alternative media are not known for their longevity.
Perhaps for reasons of ideologue burn out, perhaps due to inability to finance the operation, changing social agenda, poor quality, poor reception, poor distribution, etc., many alternative media outlets come and go rather quickly.

•Alternative media are issue oriented more than event oriented.

•Alternative media often arise from the frustration of not being served adequately by the dominant media. Hence, alternative media and their practitioners may from the start have negative views of the dominant media institutions.

•Alternative media often ask for audience financial assistance, rather than charging a set price.
This may permit financially less-able people to "subscribe" to these media and may engender a feeling of "membership" among paying subscribers that is not as relevant to persons who pay to subscribe to dominant media. Indeed, alternative media "publications" often refer to their audience as "members."

• "Alternative media are minority media, attempting to grow in a cultural climate that is, by and large, inimical to their visions and values" (Armstrong, 1981, p. 23).

•Finally, the point must me made that there is a difference between alternative media and aspiring dominant media. That difference may not be apparent at the outset. Many new media outlets have been labeled as alternative when they began, yet the mission of the outlet was to "make it" in the existing media market. Rolling Stone, for example, had many of the characteristics of alternative media when it began. Yet its publisher Jann Wenner made no secret his intention to turn it into as large a commercial success as possible. That some media outlets may transcend from being tagged "alternative" to being known as "dominant" is not all that critical to this discussion. Regardless of how such a change occurs, in the outlet's early form, as something new and different, it has (and hence promulgates) some alternative characteristics, whether or not those are altered or lost in later incarnations. Truly alternative media choose not to join the mainstream, unless the mainstream comes to adopt their values.

Alternative Media

While it is impossible to get an accurate count of alternative media outlets (because there are so many, they do not report to standard media audit organizations, they are often short-lived, sporadically published, have small circulations, and because we really don't have any fine inclusive and exclusive definition), it is nevertheless possible to say with some assurance that alternative media are abundant. The University of Connecticut library system has established an "Alternative Press Collection" "as a repository for radical and ephemeral publications

emanating from activist movements for social, cultural and political change" (University of Connecticut, 1988). This collection houses more than 3500 newspaper and magazine titles, 5000 books, and thousands of pamphlets, manuscripts, broadside communiques, etc. The 1989-90 Directory of Alternative and Radical Publications lists hundreds of currently available alternative print-media publications (Alternative Press Center, n.d.). The Utne Reader, which calls itself "The best of the alternative press," and which is essentially a Reader's Digest of the alternative media, reprints articles from publications that go beyond those listed in either the University of Connecticut collection or the Directory of Alternative and Radical Publications.

Due to its sampling nature, the Utne Reader provides a handy compendium of some cross section of the alternative press. Its major stories of the past few years include: sexual politics, technology out of control, class in America, growing older, environmental crises, violence against women, inside a men's group, animal rights, over consumption, farming, pagan publications, the new age movement, affordable housing, skinheads, business ethics, baseball, health, Marxism, racism, feminism, food safety, AIDS, glamour, who controls the news, sex, peace, rock & roll, Buddhism, channeling, American Indians, etc. Many of these articles take a fairly critical perspective. In addition, there are hundreds of other topics covered in smaller articles and letters throughout. Characteristically, the Utne Reader gives subscription information for every publication it reprints pieces from, as well as for many other "alternative" publications reviewed in each issue. The Utne is not

particularly radical. It does provide commentaries and information showing perspectives that go unreported in the dominant media.

The Utne's advertising policy warrants some mention here. In 1986 Editor Eric Utne wrote:

> Have you ever wondered why the Utne Reader carries so few ads? When we started the publication in February 1984, we decided not to carry advertising - not because we had anything against advertising in principle, but because we didn't think we'd need it. After all, the first issue of the Utne Reader was just a 12-page newsletter. Producing it was a job that two of us could handle, and it was relatively cheap to print and mail.

The Editor went on to note that the magazine had expanded to 128 pages, it's circulation had grown to 35,000, and while subscription and news-stand sales successfully recouped the magazine's costs, the magazine intended to expand its subscription base and expand the little amount of space then available in their pages for advertising. The expansion in circulation was justified in two ways: "[W]e have a sense of mission . . . [and] want to bring these stories to the attention of as many people as possible, so that our readers might make better informed decisions in their public and private lives. Second, a larger circulation will make us more attractive to national advertisers, who in turn help make the Utne Reader more financially secure" (Utne, 1986, p. 2). The remainder of the page-long Editor's Note promised to poll readers and to strictly limit advertising to the kinds of companies and products readers would approve of. This sort of apologia is not what one would expect from the

traditional press; it is what could be expected from the "alternative press." This theme continued as recently as 1990, when Editor Utne told readers:

> Utne Reader has gotten big enough now (over 200,000 paid circulation) that national advertisers have started to take notice. However, we're not going to take just anybody's ad. We'll be extremely choosy about whose messages we publish in our pages. . . . We want our advertising policy to reflect your values and concerns . . .(Utne, 1990, p. 2).

This would be accomplished, Utne said, through the use of a reader survey and invitation for reader input.

The advertising carried in this rather widely circulated "alternative" publication, though not very extensive, tends to be for "natural" health products, socially conscious investment opportunities, alternative publications, "new-age" music, and the like. Perhaps the Utne Reader is moving away from the Alternative and increasingly towards to dominant in terms of its own definition. If so, it would be in the interesting position of making a living among the dominant media by covering the alternative.

What the Utne Reader, the Alternative Press Center, and the University of Connecticut's Alternative Press Collection omit, are non-print alternative media outlets, as well as many very small scale print outlets. Such outlets are plentiful. The United States has approximately 1500 non-commercial radio stations, 350 non-commercial broadcast

television stations, and 750 low power television stations. While not all of these would likely fit squarely into the "alternative media" category, many of them have substantial affiliation with that community. In addition, cable television systems have local public access channels that are non-commercial and are used, to varying degrees, in ways consistent with the overall framework of the alternative media community. Independent film and video producers contribute to this pool as well.

The Meaning of Alternative Media for the 21st Century

While it seems inevitable that the 21st Century will be here shortly, the values we bring to the new century are not so pre-determined. They will be shaped by many factors during the next ten years. The values transmitted to the public for consideration will reflect the people and organizations responsible for their dissemination.

Recalling the beginning of this paper, values offered and adopted for the next century will offer us organizing systems, motivations, senses of desired end states as well as means for achieving those ends. The values will also somewhat shape what we think about and how much we know about various options.

To the extent that alternative media play a role in shaping our values for the 21st Century, we should expect a different set of values to be promulgated. Perhaps the most fundamental value espoused is that being different, being part of a small community, is legitimate. In addition, standing up to the majority tastes and values is justifiable. Acting to

shape the community is both possible and responsible. Thinking globally and acting locally is good. Might is not necessarily right. Dominant sex roles, racial, and national stereotypes are subject to review and change. Communities can and do exist to be cared for and to offer people support through. There are decisions to be made and actions to be taken. Power is available. There is happiness and worth to be found in non-mercantile ways. It is possible to effectively share (and perhaps spread) ideas and tastes through the media (which are more accessible and demystified). Pluralism is desirable.

These abstractions may apply to social movements and sentiments that are vehemently opposed to one another. While much of the attention of the alternative media appears to be focused on what might be considered "leftist" or "liberal" ideals, there is no ideological monopoly in the forum. The University of Connecticut collection, for example, contains representations from the anti-racist communities as well as from very racist communities. White supremacists are using public access cable channels, just as black nationalists and integrationists are. So that while the values espoused by any particular alternative media practitioners will vary, the overarching value concepts of small groups working for social/artistic/political etc. change is what remains constant.

If the values of the alternative media affect the new century, we should see more participants, feeling more involved, sharing more information, representing more interests than would be the case without the alternative media.

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